

For the Christian Messenger.

ACADIA COLLEGE.

OPENING OF SESSION.

Dear Mr. Editor,—

I had the privilege of enjoying the public exercises held at Wolfville in connection with the re-opening of Acadia College on Thursday last, and feel assured that a brief reference to them will be of interest to your readers.

I was informed that the Students' role had been called in the afternoon. The meeting at which I attended was held in the Baptist Meeting House in the evening. On the platform were seated President Sawyer and his Associate Professors. The Students attired in College costume occupied the front pews, while a very select and intelligent audience filled most of the remaining pews. At half-past seven o'clock the meeting was opened with singing and prayer. After which Rev. Dr. Sawyer in a few terse remarks referred to the circumstances under which we were met, and introduced Professor D. F. Higgins, M. A., as the orator of the evening who delivered a most able and eloquent address. It is unnecessary for me to refer at length to the subject of this address as I hope the learned Professor may be prevailed upon to furnish a copy at an early day for publication in the *Messenger*. I may say, however, that it was a masterly defence of University Education and furnished a crushing rebuke to that class of persons who, failing to apprehend the real design of Collegiate training, make the mere acquirement of knowledge to take the place of the culture of the mind, and see but little utility in any studies except those which have an immediate reference to the practical business of life. The address occupied about three quarters of an hour in its delivery, and commanded breathless attention from all present.

I must not omit to mention a part of the evening's exercise, which among many of the Students seemed to excite even deeper interest than the able effort of Professor Higgins. President Sawyer had no sooner introduced Edwin D. King, Esq., as the representative of the Associated Alumni than a certain eager hopefulness, approaching perhaps almost to nervousness, was apparent on the countenance of many of the young gentlemen present; but the hearty applause which followed the announcement of the names of the Prize-men proved that the competition had been a generous one.

The prizes which were presented on this occasion on behalf of the Alumni Society by its Secretary are as follows:—

1st Matriculation Prize \$20 to Mr. M. A. McDonald.

2nd Matriculation (B. H. Eaton Prize), \$10 to Mr. J. C. Archibald.

"Consolation" (Cricket Prize) \$10 to Mr. R. Bernal Crawley.

These together with those bestowed in June last complete the list of the Alumni Prizes for the present year. Altogether the occasion was one of great interest, and I have little doubt of our College being more generously supported if its friends had more opportunity of knowing what they are one doing at Acadia.

Fourteen gentlemen as I have been informed have just entered College, to form the Freshmen Class; and the whole number of Students will be quite as large as last year.

Yours &c.,
ALUMNUS.

For the Christian Messenger.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM SISTER DEWOLFE.

HENTHADA, BURMAH,
May 31st, 1871.

REV. DR. TUPPER.

Dear father in the Gospel.—Your letter of Nov. 23rd was received Jan. 29th, I was then in the midst of school work, Mr. and Mrs. Smith were both away; and everything comes upon me, I had not time to write. Then came the vacation, when I went immediately into the jungle, and stayed nearly a month. I then came home on account of the heat, and prepared for next school session. So I have allowed my time to run on, and neglected my correspondents. I hope they will not think me idle because I do not write; as writing seems to take up so much time, and it is hard to find it. Miss Norris has been with us some time, as you already know. She is a dear sister, and full of work. We are in the midst of school work, and find more to do than we can find time for. These children have so little training in their homes, that when

they come here we have everything to do for them.

[In a letter to Mrs. Tupper sister De W. says.]

We have had our Home Missionary Meeting—a very interesting one. There was news to tell of preaching to the heathens, and a few conversions. Many of the converts are very cheerful in giving of their means for the cause of Christ. Most of the churches have adopted the system of giving a tenth of all the Lord gives them, besides what they do for their minister.

Our school has begun; and we have ninety scholars, of whom about twenty are girls. One father and mother came in bringing three boys, whom they wanted to put into the school. When they came to leave it was really touching to see them take leave of them, giving them the final admonitions. With tears in their eyes they bade them 'good bye,' and recommended them to my care, to watch over them as my own children. They are very nice, docile children, and they will make good scholars.

Miss Norris is very happy, and is doing nicely in the language. Mr. Crawley is now in the jungle, doing his best to persuade the Burmans to try and see if they do not find Jesus an all-sufficient Saviour.

If our people intend sending Missionaries into Siam, I do hope they will now begin to pray to the Lord to prepare the way, and the hearts of the people to receive the message, so that when they go the ground may be ready for the seed.

[With reference to the widow of the late Rev. Geo. Dimock, who still, at the age of 93 years, continues to labor for the Mission, and has recently sent of her work to the value of four dollars, sister DeWolfe says.] I want to speak of that dear old lady who loves the Saviour, Missions, and me, and takes her time and strength to knit for the cause. Please give her my warm thanks.

Give my love to the Christian friends, and tell them I am well, and working hard for Jesus.

Yours very affectionately,
MINNIE DEWOLFE.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., Sept. 13th, 1871.

SHOULD CHILDREN BE BAPTIZED?

This is a grave question, and one which for many centuries has caused Christians much anxiety, and very properly so. Every Christian should not only ask the question, but be prepared to give a clear and emphatic answer, with well-defined reasons for such answer.

The Scriptures are the only source of authority in this matter, and we should be prepared to go to them, and to accept whatever they teach on this and all religious matters. If the New Testament is silent on the question we may hesitate before pronouncing a decision, but if its precepts and examples afford us any light on the subject we should be thankful, and walk in the light; and if we do so we may expect it to become clearer and brighter until we have the effulgent rays of the mid-day sun to remove all the darkness from our minds, and enable us to perceive all the simplicity and beauty of the divine ordinance. In this free unprejudiced state of mind let us see what is taught on this subject.

We might quote hosts of texts referring to baptism, but in none of them should we find that children or infants are mentioned. We read in many places of men and women being baptized, and although New Testament history does not state the same of boys and girls, yet it does speak of household baptisms as well as of households of believers, and we may fairly suppose there were young people in them.

Our object in writing this is not so much to awaken enquiry on the impropriety of baptizing unconscious infants as to remind our readers that they should have children, believing and obedient children, in the churches.

Who of us have not known quite young persons becoming desirous of shewing their love to Jesus by obeying his commands? Sometimes they have had their requests complied with and have eventually become most devoted and useful Christians. We say that children of nine years of age and upwards do often give just as good evidence of true conversion as full grown men and women, and are thus saved from many of the errors and habits of others who defer the service of Christ till a later period of life.

Nowhere does it appear that children are not to be baptized. We therefore conclude that there is nothing in the New Testament forbidding the baptism of children. Having made this frank admission it may be well for us to see what children are the proper subjects of Christian baptism. Here we have abundance of light from the Living Word. The aged apostle John writes to some members of the Christian church and calls them little children. He says to them, "I write unto you little children because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake," (1 John ii. 12). Now, if their sins had been forgiven there is every reason to believe that they had been baptized. Our Lord had sent his apostles forth, saying: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." And in every case of persons becoming converts they were baptized.

It will, we think be conceded that these "little children" were capable of having their sins forgiven. Again we read "My little children I write unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father." They were such children then as were capable of sinning, and having their sins forgiven.

Again he says of these "Little children," "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it and that no lie is of the truth."

Again the apostle Paul writes "the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

It is evident therefore that there were in the primitive churches, parents and "children;" but we find no indications that there were infants who were as yet incapable of knowing God, of sinning, of believing, and of repenting.

The apostle wrote to little children who knew the Father, and we doubt not there were some of them who had been taught whilst they were quite young and had received this sign of the remission of their sins when of quite tender age. Children should be taught and brought to the Saviour, and so soon as it is evident that they are the possessors of saving faith in Christ, and desire to follow Him in his own ordinance, we make no hesitation in saying they should be baptized. Infant baptism and the baptism of young believing children are two very different things. The sooner little children are taught the great gospel verities, and are baptized into Christ, the better for themselves their parents and the world.

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION

of Nova Scotia and N. Brunswick held their Annual Session in Salem Church during the past week. The Introductory Sermon was preached on Thursday evening, by Rev. Mr. Dodd, of St. John, N. B., from Matt. xxv. 32 "And he shall separate them one from another." The business of the Session commenced on Friday morning, when the Rev. S. G. Dodd, was elected Chairman for the ensuing year. Mr. Jas. Woodrow, of St. John, N. B., Secretary and Treasurer, and the Rev. R. K. Black, Missionary Secretary.

The Rev. Joseph Elliott gave an excellent address, as retiring chairman, Rev. Dr. Wilkes was received as Delegate from the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec.

The Rev. J. G. Baylis having united with the Church of England, sent a request that his name be removed from the roll of the Union. On motion it was resolved that his request be complied with.

Rev. W. Williams on application was elected a member of the Union.

The Committee reported on the application of the Church at Maitland and Noel, (formerly Presbyterian,) seeking admission to the Union. The following is the Report:—

The Committee of the Union report that several months since they received a communication from a Church in Maitland and Noel signed by its Pastor, 11 Elders and 105 members (and 95 other adherents) to be received into this Union.

The Committee proceeded to enquire, by correspondence with the proper officers of the Presbytery, with which they had been connected, and otherwise as to the character and standing of said church and its officers, and in doing which they had the advantage of the estimate formed by two of our ministerial brethren who had, at request of said Church, visited them and ministered to them.

They have also had communication during the greater part of Thursday, with the ministers and 3 Elders appointed by the Church to lay all the facts pertinent to the

case as presented to us, before the Committee. The result of such investigation may be stated as follows:—

1. The Church and its officers in steadfastly maintaining what they regarded as godly discipline found an insuperable interference outside their own organization; and regarding the constitution of things admitting this as defective, they withdrew and used their Christian liberty in forming themselves into an Independent Church, and thus adopted a course which we consider Scriptural.

2. In making this change, they expressed their unabated and entire confidence in their Pastor who had labored among them in the Lord for 10 years; and they used the liberty which they have of the Head of the Church, in calling him to continue his pastoral office and work with the same mutual pledges as aforesaid existed, and also in requesting other church officers to continue in the exercise of their ministries.

3. After the most rigid examination, the Committee find nothing which affects unfavourably the Christian character of either the minister, the elders, or the members; and they find that for 9 months they have been peacefully and with persistence seeking to do the Lord's work in the department for which churches are organized, and that there is evidence of a revived interest in Divine things among the people.

4. With the utmost respect for the conscientious convictions of Presbyterians and others in relation to Church government, and the rules by which it is administered, it cannot of course be expected that this Union will take cognizance of them in judging of this matter, inasmuch as by our principles as a denomination, we necessarily dispute their accordance with Scripture, and hence the Committee has restricted its consideration to points involving moral character and Christian freedom.

In respect of the former, the said church has had to deal with slanderous imputations of immoral conduct upon minister and elders, which however, are demonstrably without foundation, and the Committee regard them as entirely clear in this matter.

5. The Committee therefore do not see any valid reason against complying with the request of said Church, and we recommend the Union cordially to receive them. That the Rev. Jacob McLellan also be received, but that, inasmuch as certain statements have been made in the public prints which give unfavorable impressions, it be left to the Union Committee to enquire for and examine any evidence relating to his moral character beyond what we have already obtained; and that in the event of their coming into possession of evidence subversive of that which we have now received, they have power to declare this reception null and void.

Adopted by the Union on Saturday morning, Sept. 9th.

The Committee of the Union was composed as follows:—Revs. S. G. Dodd, Chairman; R. K. Black, Missionary Secretary, J. Elliott, C. Duff; Hon. F. Tupper, Messrs. Edward Smith, R. H. Skimmings, Isaac Burpee, and James Woodrow, Secretary.

Resolutions were adopted strongly urging Total Abstinence principles.

A resolution was also adopted in favor of the Congregational College of British North America.

On Friday evening a Missionary Meeting was held and addresses of an interesting character were delivered by Revs. Dr. Wilkes, S. G. Dodd, W. Williams and others.

The Union adjourned on Saturday to meet on the 1st Thursday in Sept., 1872, at Keswick Ridge, New Brunswick.

On Lord's day, Revs. Dr. Wilkes, and R. K. Black preached in Salem Church. Rev. S. G. Dodd, in Chalmers. Rev. S. Sykes, and Mr. Nighswander, in Granville Street. Rev. W. Williams, in the North Baptist Church, and others in the Methodist Churches of the city.

The Union has been in existence about twenty-five years. There are 14 Congregational Churches in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick with about 1100 members. All of these churches are in connection with the Union, with the exception of one which has always been on the roll of the Maine Conference of Congregational Churches. There are also a number of places of worship and preaching stations supplied by this body.

A COMBINATION CHURCH EDIFICE.

It has been facetiously remarked by somebody in consequence of the peculiarities of the Beecher family that there are three classes of persons in the world: saints, and sinners, and the Beecher family. Another instance of this doubtful character has just made its appearance, in connection with a member of that family and the new church edifice about to be erected at Elmira, N. Y., by the church of which Rev. Thomas H. Beecher is pastor. The N. Y. Independent gives the following description of this curious combination building:—

"The buildings of this church will be three—a trinity in unity—massed together in a large grassy square, ornamented with quite a forest of shade-trees. The main building contains the auditorium, which is circular: an amphitheatre after the ordinary pattern of an opera-house, without galleries. The first thirty or forty seats are on the level floor, and the rest rise in graduated tiers to the wall. The seats on the level floor will be occupied by the aged and infirm, who can enter the church

through a hall under the speaker's platform, without climbing any stairs. The people occupying the raised tiers will enter by a dozen doors, opening into the church from a lobby like an opera-house lobby, and descend the various aisles to their places. Under the raised tiers of pews are to be stalls for horses and carriages, so that they may be sheltered from sun and rain. There will be twenty-four of these stalls, each stall to be entered by an arch of ornamental masonry—no doors to open or shut. The second building is to be less lofty than the church; it is to be built right against the rear of it, and communicate with it by a door. It is to have two stories. On the first floor will be three distinct Sunday school rooms—all large, but one considerably larger than the other two. The Sunday school connected with Mr. Beecher's church has always been a "graded" one. The whole upper story of this large building will be well lighted and ventilated, and occupied wholly as a play-room for the children of the church; and it will stand open and welcome to them through a hall the week days. They can fill it with their playthings, if they choose; and, besides, it will be furnished with dumb-bells, swings, rocking-horses, and all such matters as children delight in. The idea is to make a child look upon a church as only another home, and a sunny one, rather than as a dismal exile or a prison. The third building will be less lofty than the second; it will adjoin the rear of the second, and communicate with it by a door, or doors. It will consist of three stories. Like the other two buildings, it will cover considerable ground.

On the first floor will be the "church parlors," where the usual social gatherings of modern congregations are held. On the same floor, and opening into the parlors, will be a reception-room, and also a circulating library—a free library; not simply free to the church membership, but to everybody. Also on the first floor, and communicating with the parlors, will be six bath-rooms—hot and cold water; free tickets issued to any applicant among the members of the congregation! In the second story of this building will be the permanent residence of the "church missionary," a lady who constantly looks after the poor and sick of the church; also a set of lodging and living-rooms for the janitresses; also on this second floor are to be six rooms to do duty as a church infirmary for the sick poor of the congregation, this church having always supported and taken care of its own unfortunate, instead of leaving them to the public charity. In the infirmary will be kept one or two water-beds (for invalids whose pains will not allow them to lie on a less yielding substance), and half a dozen reclining invalid chairs, on wheels. The third story of this third building is to be occupied as the church kitchen, and it is sensibly placed aloft. Dumb waiters will carry the food down to the church parlors, instead of up. But the plan of the church is an inferior curiosity, in Mr. Twain's opinion, compared with the plan of raising the money for it. When it was decided to build a new church edifice, at a cost of not less than \$20,000, nor more than \$50,000 (for the membership is not three hundred and fifty strong, and there are not six men in it who can strictly be called rich), Mr. Beecher gave to each member a printed circular, enclosed in an envelope prepaid and addressed to himself, to be returned through the post-office. In this circular the statement was made that the congregation proposed to expend for a meeting-house and other rooms an amount somewhere within the limits named above; that the work was to take four years; and that anybody was allowed to subscribe, but that nobody was urged. A pledge was appended as follows: "To help build our meeting-house I think that I shall be able to give not less than \$— and not more than \$—each year for four years, commencing April 1, 1871. Trusting in the Lord to help me, I hereby subscribe the sum as noted above." These subscriptions were to be wholly confidential. At the end of a month or two some two-thirds of the circulars had wended back, one by one, to the pastor, silently and secretly, through the post-office; and then, without mentioning the name of any giver or the amount of his gift, Mr. Beecher announced from the pulpit that all the money needed was pledged—the certain amount being over \$45,000 and the possible amount being over \$53,000! When the remainder of the circulars have come in, it is confidently expected and believed that they will add to these amounts a sum of not less than \$10,000. A great many subscriptions from children and working-men consisted of cash enclosures, ranging from a ten-cent currency stamp up to five, ten, and fifteen dollars. The success of this method of raising the funds for the building of the church is certainly a most impressive testimony to the thoroughness with which this church has been educated in charitable giving.

The Revisors of the New Testament Company have reached the end of the tenth chapter of the Gospel by Mark, and have adjourned till Oct. 17.

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A writer of Boston, in the *Ministers' Yarmouth* mentions a nomination

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